



Testimony
Elizabeth Gara
Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA)
Before the Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee
April 6, 2015

The Connecticut Water Works Association (CWWA), a trade association of municipal, regional and private water utilities supports provisions in **SB-947** which: 1) Authorizes funding to support the development of a state water plan; 2) Provides continued support for the protection of open space lands; and 3) Supports funding for the state's Clean Water Fund and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund program.

State Water Plan

CWWA **supports Section 2(d)(4) of SB-947** which authorizes funding to support the development of a state water plan. Developing a comprehensive, balanced state water plan is a critical step in ensuring that Connecticut has sufficient public water supplies to meet the state's current and future public health, safety and economic development needs while providing for other water resource needs including waste assimilation, agriculture, recreation, fisheries, and other environmental needs. This effort must be adequately funded to support the research, data collection and scientific modeling needed to ensure that the plan appropriately balances the water resources needs of the state consistent with the intent of Public Act 14-163, which directed the legislatively created Water Planning Council to oversee the development of a statewide water plan. This supporting research and data will require the use of outside professionals, such as hydrologists, engineers, limnologists and other scientists.

Open Space Lands

CWWA supports provisions in SB-947 which authorize level funding for the protection of open space lands. CWWA has long supported efforts to protect Connecticut's water supply watershed and aquifer lands by preserving these lands as open space. Connecticut has made tremendous progress in protecting the state's open space lands due to programs like the Open Space and Watershed Acquisition program and the tax credit program for the donation of open space land at discount prices. These programs provide powerful incentives to conservation groups, municipalities and water utilities to acquire and preserve open space lands to help protect Connecticut's ecological habitats, its natural beauty and its outdoor recreational areas.

Clean Water Fund & Water System Improvements

As stewards of the state's water resources, CWWA members are committed to supporting efforts to protect the state's water quality and public water supplies. The Clean Water Fund is a successful program which assists water companies and municipalities in meeting their



obligations to protect the public health and safety as well as the environment. At the same time, Connecticut's drinking water infrastructure is aging and costs and need for infrastructure projects to ensure a continued supply of quality water to meet the state's drinking water needs continues to increase. According to EPA's 2011 Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey, which evaluates the drinking water infrastructure capital improvement needs of the country and each state, Connecticut's water infrastructure needs have increased significantly. Connecticut's estimated need has grown from \$1.394 billion in 2007 to \$3.587 billion in 2011, including: 1) \$2.584 billion for Transmission and Distribution; 2) \$545.1 million for Treatment; 3) \$267.3 million for Storage; 4) \$146.6 million for water sources; and 4) \$35 million for other infrastructure needs.

As such, CWWA supports efforts to adequately fund the state's Clean Water Fund, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) and other water system improvement funding to assist water companies and communities in (1) replacing aging infrastructure to improve transmission and distribution systems, (2) complying with state and federal requirements regarding water quality and treatment, (3) expanding water storage capacity; (4) utilizing technology and equipment to improve water conservation and energy efficiency; (5) meeting statewide goals for nitrogen and phosphorus reduction and (6) addressing issues relating to combined sewer overflows.

The Connecticut Water Works Association, Inc. (CWWA) is an association of private, regional and municipal water supply utilities serving more than 500,000 customers, or population of about 2½ million people, located throughout Connecticut. As purveyors of public water supplies, our members have an obligation to provide sufficient quantities of high-quality water at a reasonable cost to consumers of the communities served.